

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

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TO USMISSION OECD PARIS

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EGEN, OECD

SUBJECT: PROPOSED CHAIRMAN FOR MEETING OECD COUNCIL AT MINIS-
TERIAL LEVEL

REF: OECD PARIS 9960

1. PER REQUEST PARA 5 REFTTEL, EMB RECOMMENDS THAT US AGREE TO DESIGNATION OF ITALIAN MIN OF THE BUDGET ANTONIO GIOLITTI AS CHAIRMAN OF OECD MINISTERIAL COUNCIL FOR 1974. OUR POSITION TAKES INTO CONSIDERATION THAT ITALY IS ONE OF FEW MAJOR COUNTRIES WHICH HAVE NOT CHAIRED MINISTERIAL COUNCIL.

2. ALTHOUGH GIOLITTI HAS SOMETIMES BEEN CAUGHT UP IN ECONOMIC POLICY DISPUTES BETWEEN HIS SOCIALIST PARTY AND ECONOMIC MINS FROM OTHER PARTIES, AS WAS RECENTLY THE CASE WITH FORMER TREAS MIN LA MALFA (REPUBLICAN), GIOLITTI PERSONALLY IS NOT DOGMATIC AND WE BELIEVE HE WOULD BE AN IMPARTIAL CHAIRMAN OF OECD COUNCIL. ALSO,
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WHILE ITALIAN SUPPORT MAY BE RELATIVELY WEAK CONCERNING PLEDGE

AGAINST RESTRICTIVE TRADE MEASURES BECAUSE OF ITALY'S CRITICAL
BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEM, WE DO NOT THINK THAT THIS SHOULD
BE OVERRIDING CONSIDERATION.

3. WE HAVE SOME DOUBTS ABOUT ADEQUACY OF GIOLITTI'S ENGLISH OR
FRENCH. HOWEVER, LANGUAGE PROBLEM WOULD PROBABLY ARISE EVENTUALLY
IN CASE OF ALMOST ANY ITALIAN ECONOMIC MINISTER, SINCE FLUENCY IN
ENGLISH AND FRENCH IS NOT COMMON AT THAT LEVEL OF GOVT. GIOLITTI
HAS STUDIED BOTH LANGUAGES. HE UNDERSTANDS ENGLISH FAIRLY WELL,
BUT APPEARS SOMEWHAT HESITANT TO SPEAK IN ENGLISH. WE DO NOT KNOW
WHETHER HIS FRENCH IS SUFFICIENTLY GOOD. IF NECESSARY, WE ASSUME
THAT SIMULTANEOUS TRANSLATION FROM ITALIAN INTO ENGLISH AND
FRENCH COULD BE ARRANGED. VOLPE

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